

Checklist for Managing Mistakes in Sports Officiating*

1. Make sure you understand the nature of the mistake that was made. Do you know what went wrong?
2. Work to understand exactly why the error happened. Was it bad judgment, an inadvertent call, or a mistake of omission or collaboration?
3. Identify associated factors that contributed to the mistake, not just the mistake itself. Were you out of position, blocked from view, or physically impaired?
4. Review how you responded both to the slip-up and its resolution. Did you make matters worse defending your mistake?
5. Identify new or additional information that reduces the chances for the mistake in the future. Are there extra resources (books, films, etc) that address the area in which a mistake was made?
6. Consider your behavior before, during, and after the error. How do you think your behavior might change in a similar situation in the future?
7. Don't compensate. In officiating, two wrongs never make a right.
8. Know which (and when) decisions are subject to correction and which calls are not open for debate. Is the mistake correctable before the event continues? Is the mistake reviewable? Can you ask for help from a fellow official?
9. Study the rules to avoid the mistake in the future. Practice the situation so that you are less prone to repeat the mistake.
10. Accept responsibility. Can you admit the mistake, at least to yourself? To colleagues? Share your lessons learned.

*Tomej, L. (2007) *Referee*. 32, 2, 14.